



THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

WASHINGTON, D. C. 20301-1200

HEALTH AFFAIRS

JUN 08 2004

MEMORANDUM FOR SECRETARY OF THE ARMY
SECRETARY OF THE NAVY
SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE
CHAIRMAN OF THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF

SUBJECT: Policy for the Use of Potassium Iodide for Protection of Service Personnel and Family Members

The use of potassium iodide (KI) to protect the thyroid gland against uptake of inhaled and ingested radioactive iodine resulting from radiological emergencies at an operating commercial land-based nuclear (CLBN) power plant is recognized as a supplement to evacuation or in-place sheltering by the World Health Organization, the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration (FDA). U.S. military personnel, their families, U.S. Government civilian workers, and U.S. Government contractors may be at risk from hostile actions against CLBN power plants, both in the continental United States and overseas, which may result in radioactive iodine release.

The use of KI at military facilities should be consistent with the "Federal Policy on the Use of KI" issued by the Federal Emergency Management Agency, (<http://www.fema.gov/txt/library/not02367.txt>).

For the purposes of this policy, personnel on military installations shall be considered as "the general public" with the exception of institutionalized persons and emergency workers whose duties could involve responding to a release from a CLBN power plant or otherwise require them to remain in the emergency planning zone. This policy is consistent with that of the Nuclear Regulatory Commission's KI Distribution Program and provides significant protection for U.S. personnel against radioactive iodine released from a CLBN power plant when KI is used as a supplement to sheltering and evacuation. This policy will be reviewed upon any future revision to the Federal policy on the use of KI.

For military facilities, any distribution of KI for use in response to a radiological emergency at a CLBN power plant shall be coordinated with the distribution by the States or local planning authorities.

For overseas military facilities, all Geographic Combatant Commanders shall evaluate the threat of radioactive iodine release from CLBN power plants and develop

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plans to protect personnel and potentially use KI for appropriately selected personnel as a supplement to evacuation and sheltering. The Geographic Combatant Commanders' (GCC) implementation plans on the use of KI should be consistent with the Federal policy discussed above and shall be based on national host government, local government, and planning authority policy on the use of KI for their own CLBN power plants. If the implementation plan is not consistent with national host government, local government, and planning authority policy, then the GCCs, through the Chairman, shall inform the Assistant Secretary of Defense (Health Affairs) and the Assistant to the Secretary of Defense (Nuclear, Chemical, Biological Defense Programs) of the basis for the decision.

Medical personnel will refer to the FDA document on "KI as a Thyroid Blocking Agent in Radiological Emergencies," for the KI dosage to different age groups, action levels, and other guidance (<http://www.fda.gov/cder/guidance/4825fnl.htm>).

The memorandum replaces Health Affairs Policy 02-004 (1/24/02), dated January 24, 2002. My point of contact is Colonel David Jarrett, Director of the Armed Forces Radiobiology Research Institute, at (301) 295-1210/0267 and email at Jarrett@afri.usuhs.mil.



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